

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 12449 160501Z

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1210

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 12449

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA IN

SUBJECT: STATUS OF SITE

PASS OES, NASA FOR BARNES

1. AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRESS REPORTS REVEALS THAT THE SITE PROGRAM HAS GENERATED GREAT ENTHUSIASM AMONG VILLAGERS, BUT SOME OF THE CHARM IS WEARING OFF BECAUSE OF THE BREAKDOWN OF TV SETS AT SOME VILLAGES. IT IS THE OPINION OF THE MAJORITY OF NEWSMEN WHO HAVE VISITED THESE VILLAGES THAT THE PROGRAMS ARE EFFECTIVE AND CERTAINLY BETTER THAN THE ONES SHOWN ON CONVENTIONAL TV IN DELHI AND BOMBAY. THIS HAS BEEN VERIFIED PERSONALLY WITH SEVERAL NEWSMEN. ALSO, FROM OUR OWN EXPERIENCE ON OBSERVING THE SITE PROGRAMS ON THE SPECIAL TV MONITOR SET IN THE EMBASSY. PROGRAMS ON FARMING AND HYGIENE HAVE BEEN MOST POPULAR, SO MUCH SO THAT VILLAGERS COMPLAIN THAT ENOUGH TIME HAS NOT BEEN DEVOTED TO THESE SUBJECTS. IT IS A TRIBUTE TO THE STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS THAT THERE IS REPORTED ALMOST A 30 PERCENT INCREASE IN SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN THE SITE AREAS.

2. IN SOME OF THE ORISSA VILLAGES, IT WAS ENVISAGED THAT TELECLUBS WOULD EXPLAIN THE PROGRAMS TO THE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 NEW DE 12449 160501Z

VILLAGERS AFTER EACH TELECAST. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE

THAT THESE HAVE BEEN ORGANIZED. THE INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION (ISRO) FEELS IT IS TOO EARLY YET TO UNDERTAKE SITE EVALUATION STUDIES. HOWEVER, THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION HAS DECIDED TO INITIATE A STUDY.

3. PRESS PRESS REPORTS INDICATE CONSIDERABLE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS IN THE MAINTENANCE OF THE TV SETS. DUE TO STRONG WINDS, SOME OF THE DISH ANTENNAS HAVE BEEN BLOWN AWAY AND A NUMBER OF TELEVISION FUSES HAVE BURNT OUT DUE TO LARGE VOLTAGE FLUCTUATIONS. THE VILLAGE SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO OPERATE THE TV SETS, IN MANY CASES SEEM TO LACK THE NECESSARY TRAINING TO EXPLAIN THE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN SET BREAKDOWNS TO THE REGIONAL SITE HEADQUARTERS. ALSO RECENT FLOODS HAVE ADDED TO THE PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE LOCAL VILLAGE OPERATOR AND THE REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR SITE. THERE IS NOW A PROPOSAL TO ENTRUST THE OPERATION OF THE VILLAGE TV SET TO A LOCAL ENGINEER, WHEREVER AVAILABLE, IN PREFERENCE TO A SCHOOL TEACHER. FROM THE VARYING ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF SETS WHICH ARE NOT OPERATING, WE ASSUME THAT ONLY 50 TO 60 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL SETS ARE FUNCTIONING PROPERLY AT ANY ONE TIME.

4. ISRO OFFICIALS HAVE CHARACTERIZED THESE PROBLEMS ONLY AS TEETHING TROUBLES WHICH ARE NORMAL IN AN OPERATION OF THIS SIZE AND INNOVATION. THEY ARE REPLACING THE BUILT-IN VOLTAGE STABILIZERS PLACED IN SITE TV SETS WITH MANUALLY OPERATED ONES TO SOLVE THE FUSE BLOWING PROBLEM. AT MANY PLACES SOLID FOUNDATIONS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR ANTENNAS TO WITHSTAND HIGH WINDS.

5. THE EARTH STATION AT DELHI AND AHMEDABAD HAVE PERFORMED EXCEEDINGLY WELL. THE QUALITY OF THE PICTURE RECEIVED AT THE VILLAGE TV LOCATIONS IS EXCELLENT.

6. ISRO FEELS THE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN RUNNING THE TV SETS ARE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE AND STEPS ARE UNDERWAY TO SOLVE THEM. IF THEY CAN WORK THE BUGS OUT OF THE PROGRAM IN THE NEXT MONTH THEY ESTIMATE AT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 NEW DE 12449 160501Z

LEAST 75 PERCENT OF THE SETS WILL BE OPERATING AT ALL TIMES. THIS CONCLUSION IS CORROBORATED ALSO BY A REPORT PREPARED BY MR. HOWARD GALLOWAY, NASA REPRESENTATIVE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE AT AHMEDABAD AFTER OBSERVING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SETS IN THE JAIPUR AND OTHER AREAS. SAXBE

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